

Global Running Day

Seminarians set yet another personal record

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Glanz and Kostyuk beat their own personal Global Running Day records and set the bar high by beating the next international runner by over 20 miles.

By: Becky St. Clair

[Oliver Glanz](#), assistant professor of Old Testament in the Seminary, and Oleg Kostyuk, PhD student and instructor in the [Seminary](#), placed at #1 on the list of [Global Running Day](#) participants worldwide on Wednesday, June 7. Over the course of under 10 hours, the two long-time runners completed 62.2 miles; an improvement of 15 miles over their 2016 GRD distance.

The second-place runner, a gentleman from Virginia, was 22.2 miles behind Glanz and Kostyuk; the runner in third place, a gentleman from Belgium, was 24.3 miles behind. (Note: Three other individuals placed between them the gentleman from Belgium)

This annual event saw over 150,000 participants from all over the world this week, running a total of nearly 500,000 km (310,000 miles) in the period of 24 hours. The leaderboard is filled with names from locations such as Brazil, Missouri, Australia, Quebec, Texas, Russia, New Jersey, Romania, France, Hawaii, U.K., Pennsylvania, Slovakia, Illinois, New Zealand, Finland and more.

Why do it?

“Because we love it!” Glanz says with a grin. “Running is a part of our daily lives but giving ourselves a goal to meet or a record to beat makes it that much better.”

In October 2016, both men [accepted a challenge](#) to run from the Andrews University campus to downtown Chicago—a distance of 100 miles. They completed the run in 21 hours, with only five brief stops for food and massage. Though this was beyond normal, even for them, being active is certainly a priority for both Glanz and Kostyuk.

“It may be a way of life for us, but we’re constantly looking for ways to push ourselves—to go ultra on our own records,” says Kostyuk. “The point is to not only get as much as we can out of life, but to encourage others to find their ultra and push themselves beyond their own records and self-imposed limits.”

Both men have lived active lives since birth. Glanz watched his pastor father ride his bike between churches in their native Germany, and spent his days running through the woods and fields, playing soccer with his friends and training for mountain climbing in the summer. Kostyuk, native of Ukraine, spent his formative years swimming, diving and hiking. Growing up active means that going ultra takes that much more effort, but both men thrive on it.

“This is how we grow,” says Glanz. “Growth can’t happen in stagnation. We have to move, push, try, compete—even with ourselves! And we hope that by doing that as part of our lifestyle we can inspire and encourage others to do the same.”

Now fathers themselves, Glanz and Kostyuk excitedly pass on their love of fitness, health and active lifestyles to their children. And it’s not just about exercise, either.

“Running is an opportunity to get in touch with nature,” says Glanz. “It’s a way to reconnect with the world God created for us and experience more of what it has to offer.”

Kostyuk adds that in addition to the serious contemplation of the outdoors, there’s also a large element of fun involved.

“Running is, for us, what going to the playground is for small children,” he admits. “When I run, I’m a child again. It creates immeasurable joy and happiness for me.”

And, staying true to their fun-loving natures, for this year’s Global Running Day the men crafted a route that would create a design when viewed on their GPS: A thumbs-up (see photo gallery above).

“As teachers and as pastors we are in a position of leadership even to those we don’t even realize are watching us,” says Glanz. “We want to use that visibility in a positive way to influence our students, our colleagues, our congregations, our children and anyone else to make positive lifestyle choices and find the fun in being active and healthy. I think it’s what God intended for his children, and it’s what I hope and dream for mine.”

Related Links

- [Mission: Fully Alive](#)--Two runners, 100 miles & wellness at Andrews
- [Global Running Day 2017 leaderboard](#)
- [University Health & Wellness](#)

Contact:

PR

pr@andrews.edu

269-471-3322